



ASTRETCH

SPRING 2014

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ANKYLOSING SPONDYLITIS AUSTRALIA



Annie McPherson President of AS Victoria Inc awarded Outstanding Individual Achievement Award (Primary Care) at 2014 Minister for Health Volunteer Awards by Vicky Genius AS Victoria Inc

In May, Annie McPherson and I attended the Victorian Minister of Health awards presentation with Sarah-Jane Dyrenfurth our Peer Support Group Coordinator at Arthritis & Osteoporosis Victoria Inc. While Sarah-Jane had been working on Annie's profile as a community speaker she decided to nominate Annie for a Volunteer Award. Ahead of many other candidates Annie was presented with an Outstanding Individual Achievement Award. Here are Annie's comments on her award: "I would like to acknowledge our AS Victoria Inc committee members and volunteers over

the years who have assisted me in making ours a successful group. An example of how this kind of volunteering follows though into "real life" occurred recently when I visited my GP who had a trainee doctor sitting in on the consultation. The trainee remembered my visit and talk at Melbourne University, Medical School two years previously. She said that the resources and experiences we provided were of great benefit to her studies."

Award Citation: Annie is a founding member of Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS) Victoria Inc. and president for the last 9

years. She has been instrumental in the establishment and growth of this group. She has increased the knowledge of over 600 people living with AS and the general community through delivering information and education to a range of community groups and individuals. She is also a health consumer representative and advocate providing information to La Trobe University and Melbourne University physiotherapy and medical students about AS. Annie is a very passionate and determined woman who despite living in chronic pain herself is highly focussed on supporting others with MSK conditions.



The Hon David Davis MP Minister for Health presents Annie McPherson with the Award and the winners group portrait.

The information contained in this newsletter should not take the place of advice and guidance from your own health-care providers.

Be sure to check with your doctor about changes in your treatment plan.

Fiona's Story—Travelling with AS by Fiona Ide

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I started my travels a little dubious how I was going to survive with AS, carrying a pack with SIJ, back and neck pain, so I packed my backpack as lightly as possible (for a year!), took some emergency pain medication and armed myself with some travel stretching advice from Margaret.



I'm now back after 18 months, having discovered that the budget traveller lifestyle worked for me. Before travelling I was lucky to have one pain free day a month, and in the first 3 months of travel I did struggle with AS and on occasions had to stay put in some places longer than expected. But as I walked around (cheapest mode of transport), did my stretches and relaxed, the AS pain settled down and I started setting myself physical challenges (also called travelling activities;) to 'test' out how far I could push my body before AS became a problem.

I'm going to start with my most recent 'challenge', the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, and leave my other adventures for another article. I'm yet to watch the Charlie Sheen movie 'The Way', but the movie's about the same trail across the north of Spain, the Camino de Santiago, that I walked. I liked the idea of the trail because it was something I could safely do myself without having to carry a lot of heavy stuff. And it was well set up! I didn't need to take a tent, sleeping bag, cooking gear or large quantities of water or food, which made my pack a lot lighter.

I walked over 900km from Saint Jean Pied de Port in France, to Santiago de Compostela and continued a little further to the original 'end of the earth' Finisterre and Muxia. For 36 days I averaged about 25kms a day with one day rest after catching a nasty cold, grrr. (My adventure also coincided with the Walk your A.S. Off challenge, so I could submit some decent numbers of steps for the QLD team that

Bruce Williams organised this year ;).

The walk itself was a great experience. It was fun to be in Spain, meeting interesting people and enjoying the walking. Best of all was very minimal AS pain, even sleeping in old bunk beds! My feet and legs definitely took a hammering, but the only real AS pain I suffered was after a few long back-to-back days of 38k and 40ks (which also meant I was very time and energy poor to do my regular stretching). Happily the pain didn't stay around long though.



I'll leave you with a photo of me drinking out of the free wine fountain (yipee), and the other waiting for a bed the day I didn't feel well so walked a shorter 15km day and arrived too early for the albergue (hostel) to be open! If anyone wants to ask me about this walk, please do.

Fiona

AS Clinic Update & Rheumatology Association Conference

by Linda Bradbury, Steve Truong and Kelly Hollis

Update from the AS clinic, Princess Alexandra Hospital

– Linda Bradbury

In May, a group of us from the AS clinic at the Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) went to the annual Australian Rheumatology Association conference in Hobart. There was a specific session on Ankylosing Spondylitis chaired by Professor Matthew Brown, rheumatologist from the AS clinic and Dr Jane Zochling, rheumatologist from Hobart. Dr Nivene Saad, radiologist from the PAH presented on MRI imaging, Dr Gethin Thomas from the University of Queensland Diamantina Institute presented on bone immunology with an update on the current research and finally Dr Steven Truong presented his research project on genetics and Xray progression.

I was invited to talk about my role as a rheumatology nurse practitioner in a session on improving care and Kelly Hollis, rheumatology nurse, presented a case study. There were of course, many other presentations and sessions about all aspects of rheumatology and patient care but we thought however, it would be interesting for readers to learn more about Steve's project and also to hear about Kelly's presentation:

From Bench to Bedside

– Dr Steve Truong

In the AS clinic, I'm often asked what we do with all the surveys, blood and X rays we collect from our study volunteers. Many researchers at the UQ Diamantina Institute (UQDI) are investigating what causes AS, but my research project looks at severity.

Severity of AS is commonly measured in a number of ways – the amount of pain, the degree of restriction of daily activities, work and play and the amount of spinal bone

formation. Medication, stretching and being active are usually effective at relieving AS symptoms, but they only have a mild effect on bone formation. Bone formation impairs range of movement which may not be painful, but makes most daily tasks a little bit harder, and some activities much more difficult. Over a lifetime, about 1/3 of people with AS have bone formation across their entire spine. To date, little is known about what influences bone formation in AS, but time, being male and smoking have repeatedly been shown to cause faster progression.

Bone formation is slow in AS, so to study it we need large numbers. At UQDI we have existing research collaborations with AS researchers in the UK, US and Canada. By pooling our data we have thousands of individuals, many of whom we have gathered genetic data on. My task is to compare our collected data (e.g. smoking status, genetic markers) with the rate of bone formation seen on each X ray. By identifying features that influence bone formation we highlight therapeutic targets. We hope that this work will lead to more treatment options for AS, in terms of lifestyle changes and medication.

Stay active, keep stretching and we'll see you in the AS clinic!

Dr Steve Truong

AS Research Fellow, Rheumatology Trainee

UQ Diamantina Institute, Princess Alexandra Hospital

Making A Difference

– Kelly Hollis

As Linda mentioned, I was given the opportunity to discuss a case study at our annual rheumatology meeting in Hobart. My talk was very well received and it provoked interesting questions from the audience.

I aimed the case study to focus on the importance of the interdisciplinary or team approach that we use in the Ankylosing Spondylitis Specialist Clinic. As many of you will know, this involves the care of the rheumatologist, specialist nurse and expert physiotherapist. In this particular case, the patient had both AS and osteoporosis, so it was important that his treatment was managed accordingly. The rheumatologist was able to prescribe medications to help with pain levels and symptom control. The specialist nurse provided education around disease management and process, medications including mode of action and side effects and diet. Finally, the physiotherapist assisted in helping with ways to reduce falls, encouraged weight bearing exercises resulting in an individualised program. By using this approach, the patient's pain levels were reduced, he felt educated about his disease and he was able to resume activities safely such as gardening.

Research shows that interdisciplinary management with patients who have chronic conditions can assist with improved patient management and ultimately better outcomes. We hope that you feel this is the case when you see us in the clinic!

Kelly Hollis

Rheumatology Nurse

AS clinic, Princess Alexandra Hospital

The research led by Professor Matthew Brown at UQDI continues and we thank everybody that has helped us over the years – the research can only survive with your help! I hope you have found this article of some interest and look forward to seeing some of you in clinic in the future!

Linda Bradbury

Nurse Practitioner

AS clinic, Princess Alexandra Hospital

Stop Struggling with your Spondyloarthritis: Cultivate Acceptance, Mindfulness and Self-Compassions (Part Two) by Penny Lewis (Clinical Psychologist)

Please see our previous Winter edition of this Newsletter for Part One.

This is part two of an article in which I reflect on my personal journey with Spondyloarthritis (SpA) over the last 25 years and which psychological therapies have given me the most effective coping strategies. Top of the list were Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT). So why have ACT and CFT been so helpful to me and my clients who suffer from chronic illnesses?

If I had to use three words to answer this question, they would be ‘mindful compassionate acceptance’. In part one of this article, I discussed ACT, with its core principle of acceptance and how this can help with managing SpA. In part two of this article, I will talk more about the power of mindfulness and compassion.

Mindfulness

While mindfulness has been a part of the Buddhist tradition for over two and a half thousand years, it was only brought to the world of psychotherapy in 1979 by an American medical professor and author - Jon Kabat-Zinn. He integrated mindfulness into a treatment program (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction) to successfully help people manage chronic intractable pain.

Kabat-Zinn defined mindfulness as “paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment and without judgment.” So, it is a form of meditation that cultivates focused attention on present moment experiences with full acceptance of whatever arises – including awareness of pain. The power of mindfulness is now being realised as more and more studies are finding evidence supporting the effectiveness of mindfulness to help people cope with anxiety, pain, depression, and chronic illness. Scientific research has also found that regular mindfulness practice can enhance immune functioning, decrease reactivity to stress and increase positive states of mind.

Self-Compassion

One of the more powerful recent developments in therapy for me over the last decade has been Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT), developed by an English psychology professor – Paul Gilbert. Professor Gilbert has highlighted that we are often harshly critical of ourselves for things that are not in our control, in a world that is very challenging with a mind that is often chaotic and easily triggered into distress.

CFT aims to help you cultivate a compassionate resource within yourself to help you manage these realities. Although it has gathered momentum over the last decade, developing compassion for ourselves and others has its roots in the Buddhist teachings, as found in Loving Kindness meditations. Loving kindness practices are now being integrated into psychotherapy because of their power to transform suffering.

Grieving

As I have managed my SpA, it has also been helpful to be aware of the stages of grief outlined by psychiatrist Elizabeth Kübler-Ross. While she identified these stages in her work with people suffering from a terminal illness, they were later found to be just as relevant for those grieving for the loss of health in a chronic illness. I have certainly observed in myself the Denial (“maybe they got it wrong, maybe it will go away”); Bargaining (“maybe I can fix it with this vitamin or that alternative approach”); Anger (“why do I have to have this ...it’s not fair”); Depression (I can’t do X, Y or Z anymore) and finally Acceptance (“It is what it is. I can make room for this, and live a full life around it”).

However, it is important to keep in mind that these stages are not just moved through sequentially and in this order – it is a back and forth movement and the feelings may arise at any time and in any order. Also, as grief is a very personal experience, not everyone experiences all the stages, and each stage can last for

minutes to months to years, depending on the individual.

What makes grieving even more difficult is that your SpA may also be progressive, or have additional associated health conditions that may appear further down the track. Consequently, just when you think you have accommodated this illness, the goal posts are moved and there is more you have to find a way to live with. And there you are feeling angry or denying or bargaining again.

Use Self-compassion to Step Back from the Struggle

As mentioned in part one of this article, when managing a chronic illness it is very common to find yourself struggling to “get rid of” it or to control it, which only makes matters worse. Knowing that grieving is a normal process of coming to terms with a chronic illness has helped me to step back from it and notice the struggle, rather than stay in the struggle. Mindfulness has also assisted me with disengaging from the struggle and having compassion for myself in this process has been vital.

This may be most relevant when you find yourself feeling angry and frustrated about the SpA and your inability to control it. As I have said, anger is part of the normal grieving process in the face of losing health and managing limitations you are confronted with. However, as there are no suitable external targets for this anger, you may turn this anger inwards, feeling angry at yourself, or your body, for letting you down or creating this illness. You may be criticising yourself for not being able to do more or cope better.

The key point for me from CFT was to develop a “compassionate-self”. Instead of blaming yourself, CFT helps you to cultivate this “compassionate-self” by imagining what you would say to a dear friend if you wanted to be compassionate and caring towards them. Connecting to this compassionate-self can turn on the areas in your brain associated with self-soothing instead of self-criticism. The self

Stop Struggling with your Spondyloarthritis *continued from Page 4*

-soothing system in your brain can be activated by speaking to yourself in a kind inner voice with caring words, and using a loving facial expression with some gentle touching or patting of your face or body (our brains are intrinsically wired to be soothed by these actions).

This compassionate-self would be like a caring buddy who can be with you 24/7 to support you at difficult times. A part of you that is committed to your well being and has the wisdom to know and remind you that this is not your fault, and you are doing the best you can in a life that can be very challenging.

Just imagine for a moment, what it would be like to go through life with a reliable, compassionate and caring companion by your side. That is exactly what CFT offers you. We are all told that you cannot be truly loved until you learn to love yourself. In the same way, I would say you cannot truly come to terms with a chronic illness until you learn to develop compassion – truly, deeply – for yourself.

Appreciate what you can do

Another key to managing SpA is being mindful and appreciative of what you can do, rather than focusing on what you can't do. So, after kindly acknowledging the difficulties you are dealing with, this compassionate-self could also help you to shift your focus away from what you can't do, to appreciating your body and the millions of things that you are still able to do. Bringing an attitude of gratitude to your daily life, and 'counting your blessings' in the midst of your limitations will help you through.

This does not mean that you shut out your grief. You still need to allow some time to feel the loss and anger and shed some tears. But then you will be more able to shift your focus and re-engage with the present and do something that you find meaningful or pleasurable.

I remember once being on a beautiful beach in the Whitsundays, but being unable to walk along it as I had an episode of plantar fasciitis. It was such a beautiful cloudless sunny afternoon that I did not

want to miss out. So I got down on my knees and crawled along the beach and found the most beautiful tiny shells hidden amongst the washed up seaweed that I would never have seen otherwise. I was able to fully focus (mindfully) on the sand and shoreline, enjoying the colours, and textures, and really savoured this moment in time. I collected the shells in a bag which I keep in my office to remind me of being mindful of the small positive joys that may otherwise be overlooked in the midst of limitations and distress.

Mindfulness, Self-Compassion and Pain

Mindfulness can be used in one of two ways to manage pain. Initially you may use it to assist with moving your attention away from the pain onto more rewarding aspects of your present moment. Using your senses, you may shift your focus from the painful sensations and worries, to more pleasant sensual experiences like tasty food, enthralling music, the smell of a flower, feeling a hug, stroking a pet, or looking at a beautiful sunset. You may also shift your attention to think about what you value and decide how you want to act in the present moment with the pain.

With more advanced practice in mindfulness and self-compassion, you will be able to observe your pain sensations with curiosity and kindness. Subsequently, you will notice any thoughts, sensations and emotions as they arise, without trying to change them or condemn them. Rather, you will have the capacity to sit with them, describe them as they are in this present moment, and watch them come and go with compassion for yourself. Repeated practice will enable you to become more open to them and to give up the struggle and judgements that would make them worse.

To allow you to experience this with some guidance, I invite you to go to the website www.positivityresonance.com/meditations.html where you will find a range of free downloadable Loving Kindness meditations. One of my favourite meditations is the one by Mary Brantley

(under Additional Guided Meditations) and is called Lovingkindness for the Body. This meditation is particularly soothing as it combines mindfulness with an attitude of gratitude and loving kindness. I find it particularly supportive to listen to in the morning before I get out of bed as I deal with the usual morning aches and stiffness.

Changing your Brain

Psychologists have long known that what you pay attention to will change the way you experience your environment. Recent studies have revealed that what you focus your attention on repeatedly over time can also ultimately make long lasting changes in brain pathways and structures. Just like building and maintaining muscle strength can be done with repeated weight lifting, repeated activation of certain brain pathways will create, strengthen and maintain them. Thus, regular self-compassion and mindfulness meditation will make changes in your brain. This will mean that what is initially a state of mindful awareness, acceptance and self-compassion, can become more of an enduring way of relating to yourself.

Again, it is similar to training with weights so that you can play a sport better. While you may not notice the benefits at the time (and it may even feel tedious), it is when you are out on the playing field later that you appreciate the time you have put into training to build up that strength. Thus, I encourage you to put the time into a regular mindfulness and self-compassion practice (even if it is just a few minutes each day pausing to observe your breath and then wishing yourself well). If you put the time into developing this part of your brain, you will then have access to a resource that will allow you to maintain a degree of equanimity in the face of flare-ups and all the other challenges that come with SpA.

For further information and resources about ACT, Mindfulness and Compassion, with free downloadable Mindfulness and Loving Kindness audios, I invite you to go to my website www.penlewis.com.

AS Exercises by Margaret Lewington (Physiotherapist)

Recently I was standing on the beach, enjoying some winter sunshine, and felt like moving and stretching. I thought of these exercises which are simple to do while standing or sitting and great in the outdoors - perhaps as you have a break while going for a walk.

For all these exercises, start with a nice tall upright posture. Breathe and relax, keep tall.

Start gently, with a smaller movement, and then push a little further and try to get more movement. Repeating the exercise several times, finding a rhythm, can be helpful to gain the extra stretch.

Place your hands on your shoulders, or as near as you can.

1. Open Wide



Bring your elbows forward in front - to touch if able, then take wide, opening the front of your chest. Do not take the elbows back too far - but rather think of the front of your chest opening.

2. Side Bend



Lean your trunk to the side, tuck one elbow into your side near your hip and take the other elbow as high as possible over your head. Repeat to the other side. After a few repetitions of this, you may also like to straighten your top arm and reach as far as you can to the side, over your head.

3. Turn Side to Side



Keeping your elbows at shoulder height, turn to look behind you, taking your elbow around as far as possible. Repeat to other side.

4. Trunk Forward Curl



Bring your elbows close together in front and down towards your tummy. This will curl your trunk. Then stand tall again and take your elbows out wide but also up as far as you can to help you extend your trunk back a little.

5. Diagonal Curl



Take one elbow forwards and down towards your opposite knee or hip. Lift your other elbow as high as possible behind you. Look at the top elbow, as this helps to get you to turn further. Come back up to straight and then go to the other side.

6. Trunk Curl - Side



While standing tall, turn to face the left side. Then take both elbows down towards your left hip, let them come together and your trunk will curl forwards. Now stand tall, taking your elbows wide and leaning back with your trunk. You will be looking upwards to the side.

Ankylosing Spondylitis Victoria Inc Report by Annie McPherson

Welcome to new members Gary and Dorothy. Now that our web and social media pages are more accessible we are finding regular enquiries each week.

The **Fairfield RSL Coffee and Chat** event during the day in July and August, enabled people to catch up without having to go out in the cold winter nights and this has proven to be a successful move.

The **Christmas in July dinner at Rosstown Hotel, Carnegie** was well attended this year by long-standing members and family. (17 in all). New members attending for the first time, included Paul Fallon and family. Adam was able to capture the occasion and posted the photo on our AS Victoria Inc Facebook page

www.facebook.com/asgroupvic

The **Social media page** is up and running now with Adam and Vicky regularly posting events, news and items from our associates. We have received great positive feedback on Michael Slater's TV interview in July, the Caulfield Health AS Physiotherapy course and our events.

We held another **Arthritis and AS Information Table** at **Austin Health, Tobruk Centre, Repatriation Campus, Heidelberg**, during Healthy Bones Week, Tuesday 06 August. The day progressed well with many enquiries from people attending the Rheumatology and Spondylitis Clinics. A number of our AS Victoria members chatted with our volunteers and some of the people attending the clinics. We do need more volunteers to help for an hour or so, to give people a coffee break. It was a great opportunity to catch up with our AS Vic members who were visiting from the country.

The **Caulfield Community Health Service, Physiotherapy AS program** has been scheduled for late August,

concluding in the first weeks of October. Belinda Coulter has advised this session is fully booked with only 1 place available at this time and thanks to our team for the good work in promoting this course.

AS Vic Member Renewals , Annual General Meeting and social function: Our committee has been busy with our annual membership renewals, AGM and the after-party social function. We have over 80 members to renew, so this has been a big task and the team has done very well to achieve all the mail-outs on time.

I would like to personally thank all the committee members and volunteers who have worked so hard through-out the year. A large amount of administration work goes on behind the scenes to keep our peer support group going and the e-media and mail-outs up to-date for our members.

At our AGM in August at Austin Health, the Office bearers for 2014-2015 year were appointed. I am sure all members will welcome and support the new committee members this year:

President: Annie McPherson

Vice President: Adam Collard

Secretary: Claire McLinden

Treasurer: Vicky Genius

Committee Members:

Maria Makris

Allan Davidson

Paul Fallon

Our 9th AS Information Seminar at Austin Health will be held in late October 2014, with a number of health professionals presenting interesting and informative talks on all things related to AS. The program and speakers will be available by the end of September so look for our flyers in the mail-outs and on the web page.

www.asvictoria.org

www.facebook.com/asgroupvic

Arthritis & Osteoporosis Victoria:

Linda Martin has requested our Peer Support Group (PSG) contribute to their activities: **Make-a-Move** a fund raising and awareness activity during Healthy Bones Action Week: AS Vic was invited to attend the Dance and Concert, and community information stands at Federation Square on Friday 08 August. I attended and shared a space with Beryl and Bill Logie from the Melbourne Osteoporosis Support Group and grooved along to the Rock and Roll revival band with lots of other golden oldies. The event was also supported by the Australian Dairy Industry.

Rheumatology /Musculoskeletal Helpline fund-raising: All A & OV's PSG's has been charged with raising funds by September 1st towards maintaining the MSK Helpline run by the two Rheumatology Registered Nurses at Arth&Osteop Vic. I have found this service incredibly helpful with clinical queries from people specifically about medication, treatment and management of AS. . Our member from the Yarra Valley, Allan Davidson and his wife Ruth have generously donated a selection of wraps and scarves from Women's Foundation from Nepal to help with fund raising.

Hope to see you at our next event,
kind regards,

Annie McPherson



AS Group of Queensland Report *by Ross Wilson*

Holidays are great but it seems to only take a week back at work before it all seems like a distant memory. It was great to catch up with fellow committee member, Steve, and his wife Robyn for a hectic couple of days in Singapore. I was worried they would be all holidayed out after nine weeks travelling, but I think they were fresher than us. I still don't know how I let him talk me into riding the "Mummies Return" roller-coaster at Universal Studios.

The 2014 Annual General Meeting was held on the 3rd June at Tomato Brothers Pizza Café at Wilston. A good roll up and great food made for an enjoyable evening. The meeting part of the night was well timed to coincide with the food.

Our new Committee was elected and is as follows:-

President	Ross Wilson
Secretary	Mark Robinson
Treasurer	Maritza Sullavan
Social Co-ordinator	Steve Fletcher
Newsletter Editor	Greg Johnson
General Committee	Graham Collins, Rod Nason, Tony Rolfe

Michael Russell, although not on the Committee, will continue to host our Facebook page.

Here is my address from the AGM: -

Hello and welcome to the Annual General Meeting of the Ankylosing Spondylitis Group of Queensland. I would like to thank you all for taking the time to attend.

I would like to thank Margaret and my fellow committee members for their continued support and efforts over the past year.

We have had some great events this past year, including dinners and BBQ's, barefoot bowls and even indoor rock climbing, but our biggest event was the Symposium which was held at the TRI at Princess Alexandra Hospital. With over 120 guests and a great line up of speakers the day was a huge success and once again a big thanks to Margaret and the committee and their partners for their tireless efforts to make the day the success it was.

We are currently working with Arthritis QLD to implement the new support group by-laws. There

have been a few sticking points with some of the requirements contained in the by-laws, but we will continue to work together to resolve these matters.

This year we will continue to do our best to support those people living with Ankylosing Spondylitis and work towards an improved web site among other things.

Once again thank you all for attending.

A number of the Committee met with Annie McPherson (AS Victorian Present) in July to discuss new and ongoing topics which impact on both of our groups. It is great that Annie takes the time out of her vacation to meet with us each year as so much more is achieved face to face.

Good news for those people living on the Sunshine Coast. A small social group has been set up, so if you are interested let us know and we will pass on the contact details. Alternatively chat to some of our members via Facebook at [AS Sunshine Coast](#).

Our table tennis day in June was great fun. Although only a small group attended, the competition was fierce. After many heated battles it came down to myself and Mark in the final. Unfortunately youth won over. Upcoming events include dinner on the 30th August, a BBQ at Bribie Island on the 19th October and Christmas dinner on the 6th December. It would be great to see you at one of these events so please consider coming along.

Always remember! Stay Positive. **Ross Wilson**



Coffee at Coloum with AS Sunshine Coast

Calendar of Events

VICTORIA

Refer to www.asvictoria.org for details or
Annie McPherson mob: 0408 343 104

Tuesday 9th Sept: Committee Meeting @Austin Hospital 6:00 to 8:30pm.

Tuesday 16th Sept: Coffee and Chat @ Fairfield RSL
6:00 to 8:00pm

Please also check Arthritis & Osteoporosis Vic. website for
events www.arthritisvic.org

QUEENSLAND

Refer to www.asaustralia.org/qld/ for details or
Mark Robinson mob: 0407 425 750

Sunday 12th October: Bribie Island BBQ from 10:00am
Turn left straight after bridge, go past boat ramp and
shops. You will see the AS Banner on the left with some
swings and BBQ's. This is where we will be. B.Y.O. Lunch
and Drinks , there is a Fish and Chip Shop nearby!!

Saturday 6th Dec: Xmas Party at 6.30pm
Restaurant: Chai Thai—148 Merthyr Road NEW FARM
Price is \$30 per head.

Hydrotherapy Classes

BRISBANE (QLD)

Sessions supervised by **Margaret Lewington** (Physiotherapist).

When: Tuesday evenings.

Time: 6:30 - 7:30pm

Where: Hydrotherapy Pool

Lvl 2, Ned Hanlon Building

Royal Brisbane & Women's
Hospital

Butterfield St, HERSTON.

Cost: \$10 or 10 classes for \$90

Enquiries: Margaret on

0404 414 501 or 07 3376 6889



PERTH (WA)

Sessions supervised by experienced
Physiotherapists.

When: Monday evenings (Public
holidays excepted).

Time: Two sessions.

Hydrotherapy pool 5:30 - 6:30pm.

Gymnasium & pool 5:45 - 7:45pm.

For those current group members
and those who have recently partic-
ipated in an AS program with the
Hospital or the Arthritis Founda-
tion.

Where: Royal Perth Rehabilitation
Hospital,

Shenton Park Annexe, Selby St,
SHENTON PARK.

Cost: \$8

Enquiries: Lindsay 08 9382 7307



Facebook Groups

[AS Brisbane](#)

[AS Sunshine Coast](#)

[AS Group VIC](#)

General Information

**Ankylosing Spondylitis Groups
of Australia**

www.asaustralia.org

Ankylosing Spondylitis Victoria Inc

www.asvictoria.org

Arthritis Australia

www.arthritisaustralia.com.au

**Spondylitis Association of America
(SAA)**

www.spondylitis.org

*Contains message boards, online chat forums,
and a members only section for resources*

**Ankylosing Spondylitis Internation-
al Federation (ASIF)**

www.spondylitis-international.org

**The National Ankylosing Spondyli-
tis Society (NASS - United King-
dom)**

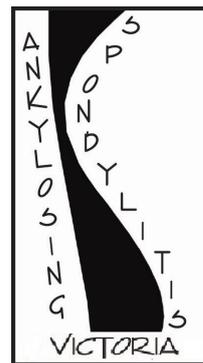
www.nass.co.uk

*Contains an excellent questions and answers
section and downloadable guidebook - A Posi-
tive Response to Ankylosing Spondylitis-
Answer and practical advice.*

Ankylosing Spondylitis Victoria Inc

Membership Form

AS Victoria Inc is an Arthritis and Osteoporosis Victoria Peer Support Group



Who we are and what we do....

AS Victoria is an organisation of people with Ankylosing Spondylitis who wish to improve knowledge and ability to manage the condition. Our group shares a number of goals and objectives for people and families living with Ankylosing Spondylitis.

We aim to provide the following:

- Provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and experiences.
- Distribute information to patients and medical professionals on AS.
- Provide and co-ordinate educational information, events, workshops and seminars on AS.
- Co-operate and interact with local, interstate, international Arthritis and peer support groups including participation in their events and activities.
- Arrange social events and activities for our group members, their families and friends

Some of the benefits of belonging to our group:

- AStretch newsletter
- Seminar evenings with excellent guest speakers
- Improved awareness of AS and the AS community
- Opportunities for interaction with other members at social gatherings and activities
- Land exercise DVD for people with AS

Membership Details

First Name: _____ Surname: _____

Mobile: _____ Home: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

I wish to become a member of AS Victoria Inc support the purposes of the organisation and agree to comply with the rules for an incorporated association under section 46 of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012.

Signed: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Send to:

AS Victoria Inc

PO Box 3166

Burnley North 3121

asvicweb@gmail.au

www.asvictoria.org

Ankylosing Spondylitis Victoria Inc complies with the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 and will not sell your personal information to another organisation. You may be notified of AS Victoria Inc events, services and ways of assisting us to maintain these services. If you wish your name to be removed from our data base at any time please write to us. AS Victoria Inc passes on to members a variety of information on health and medical issues only for general, educational and informative purposes. AS Victoria Inc is not diagnostic or prescriptive and does not replace the services or advice of a qualified health care professional or purport to do so.

Membership Type

- New Renewal (annual 30th June)
- Mail out# membership (\$25.00)
- Concession* Mail out# membership (\$20.00)
- Email member ship (\$20.00)
- Concession* email membership (\$15.00)

Donation: \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Cheque, money order or direct deposit -

AS Victoria Inc NAB BSB : 083 399 Account : 154321878

#Mail out membership all correspondence will be sent by Australia Post

**Concession rate available for pensioners, unemployed with health benefit card and full time students with student card.

Statistical Information (Optional):-

1. Are you a member of Arthritis Victoria? Y / N
2. Can we pass on your contact details to other members of the group in your area? Y / N
3. Gender M / F
4. Year of Birth: _____ 5. Preferred Language: _____
6. Do you suffer from A S Y / N 7. Do you know someone who suffers from A S Y / N

Do you have any other conditions?

.....

Are there any specific activities you would like us to organise?

.....

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